



City of Saint Paul

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**SAINT PAUL LONG-RANGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Monday, August 13, 2012 at 3:30 p.m.
Central Library Fourth Floor Conference Room**

Members Present:	Monica Bryand, Jacob Dorer, Diane Gerth, Becca Hine, Deb Jessen, Melanie McMahon, Mark Miazga, Gene Olson, Dave Pinto, Paul Sawyer, Darren Tobolt, Gary Unger, Avi Viswanathan
Members Excused:	Michael Steward, D'Ann Urbaniak Lesch
Members Absent:	Patrick Sellner
Visitors and City Staff Present:	

1. Convene

Meeting convened at 3:30 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Unger moved approval, Mr. Sawyer seconded. Committee voted all in favor.

3. Approval of July 9, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Olson moved approval, Mr. Sawyer seconded. Committee voted all in favor.

4. Chair's Comments

Ms. Gerth had no comments.

5. 2014 – 2015 CIB Process Discussion

See attached proposal and scoring forms from 2012 – 2013 process, and draft calendar for 2014 – 2015 process.

Ms. Gerth outlined materials in the meeting packet, including the proposal form, scoring information, and draft calendar. Mr. McCarthy talked about a meeting with executive directors from the District Councils. He discussed District Councils' concerns over their role in prioritizing projects in their districts, and citywide and multi-district projects.

Committee discussed the different options for scoring. Ms. McMahon asked if the points would be divided across categories or if each task force would get its own point total. Mr. Unger said the point is to get a sense of how the district really feels about their top projects. Ms. Hine said she didn't want there to be any discrepancy between neighborhoods with greater needs, or more projects in the rankings. Ms. McMahon suggested awarding points and doing a ranking so the ranking would give you an overall sense of the District's priorities.

Mr. Pinto said he was worried that the system would just make more work without much more value, because it is qualitative, not combined into a quantitative score where points are weighted more heavily. He said it tells how district councils feel, and doesn't constrain the Committee quantitatively.

Ms. Hine said she liked the idea of giving district councils points, as long as the points aren't used numerically to factor as part of the score.

Ms. Hine brought up the use of scoring citywide and multi-district projects. Mr. Unger said there is a real difference with multi-region projects.

Mr. Pinto said that maybe the district council's impact can just come through their task force members – that maybe district councils should be more connected with their task force members and make sure task force members understand the priorities of the district. He said the whole point of task forces is to weigh in on projects that impact the city.

Mr. Dorer said there are often issues with classification of multi-district and citywide projects. He said once the process has started it's hard to change that designation. He said districts can end up having less input if projects are classified as multi-district.

Mr. Unger cited the example of the Ford Plant and said it will affect everyone in a major way. He said that the Highland neighborhood will have the most at stake, but the entire city will want to weigh in on that.

Ms. Gerth said there is a desire of everyone to know what's going on with citywide projects, and everyone should be able to evaluate those projects.

Ms. McMahon asked if the Committee was looking to make decisions at this meeting.

Ms. Gerth said it would be helpful to get a sense of the committee of where or if the Committee wants to make changes to the system. She said she thought the last cycle went better than two cycles ago, because the Committee was less wedded to the numbers than two cycles ago. She said there is a lot of "gut" in the evaluation.

Mr. Olson asked if the Committee needs to change low, medium, high for citywide and multi-district projects, or if they could leave it as is. He said it's a clear way for districts to communicate priorities.

Ms. Hine asked if there was a reason districts submitted their evaluations before task force presentations are done.

Mr. Sawyer said that the role of district councils is to be relatively parochial in their evaluations. He said it's a good place for them to give their input, but he said he doesn't know that the Committee needs to put a lot of time into recreating that part of the process especially on the multi-district and citywide projects. He said there are a lot of other stakeholders that we solicit input from in the community.

Ms. Bryand said the Committee doesn't need to put that much weight into the district council input. She said the Committee goes on site visits, hears the presentations, etc.

Mr. Pinto asked if multi-district and citywide projects are treated the same with high, medium, and low. Committee discussed and said yes.

Mr. Sawyer said that lots of projects have shadow effects that ripple out throughout city. He wondered how to determine what's citywide or multidistrict.

Mr. Pinto asked if the Committee could stop using multi-district or citywide project distinctions and just give district councils a list of all projects and a total number of points to can allocate citywide.

Mr. Viswanathan asked about what would happen if a district wants to foist an undesirable project onto a neighboring district.

Mr. Pinto said it's not a quantitative evaluation

Mr. Viswanathan asked why the Committee cares about what a district has to say about a project that's all the way across the city.

Committee discussed the idea of giving each district an allotment of points.

Mr. Olson said the Committee might be getting back to points on projects within district, and just high/medium/low on citywide and multidistrict projects. He said that's where he's leaning.

Mr. Unger brought up the example of Como Pool and District 10. He said district councils are not real comfortable with having projects jammed down their throat by the city. He said there's a feeling that they're not thought of highly in this process and the Committee needs to do something to let them know that their input is valued in this process.

Ms. Gerth noted that the Committee has people from all over this city. She said last fall she went around and talked to district councils about how they can participate in this process. She said she's happy to meet with them again and invited other members to participate.

Mr. Sawyer said that however it is set up he wants to make sure the Committee is not giving district councils unrealistic expectations that they are going to be able to overwhelmingly change the projects that get picked.

Mr. Viswanathan said he also wanted to point out that the other point of input is the public hearing. He recalled that there were a few projects that had a lot of people at the last one and that really changed the way projects were ranked.

Ms. Gerth asked if there were any other issues that stuck out.

Mr. Dorer said projects that are put together by non-city departments often don't have the resources to put proposals together well and they can have unrealistic expectations. He said the Committee communicates with the district councils that they should submit "with a grain of salt" and understand that only a small percentage will end up being funded. He said district councils put a lot of time into the process and then get frustrated when nothing comes from it.

Committee discussed how to communicate that up front. Ideas included putting a notice that the city has very limited funds, or that projects over \$1 million or certain types of projects are unlikely to get funded.

Ms. Gerth said that City staff also works very hard at looking at other sources of money for these types of projects. Mr. McCarthy said that the city is planning to host a retreat for organizations to come in and discuss project ideas.

Ms. McMahon suggested having a checkbox on the proposal form that says something like, "proposers are highly encouraged to speak with your district council, or CIB Committee members" or "if this project is related to X, talk to Public Works, or Parks." She said the proposal form could include something where proposers would have to actively acknowledge that they are aware of the resources that are available to them.

Mr. Unger said he wasn't sure what information the Committee gives to proposers. He said maybe starting with a glossary explaining what MSA and CDBG, and other technical terms stand for, because they have to know these things before taking the time to put proposals together. He said maybe there should be an information packet to go out with the proposals.

Ms. Hine said that when proposers come to the workshop, they need to have the description filled out. She asked if the city receives projects that are ineligible. Committee discussed. Ms. Gerth said it is complicated and there are rules about city bond funding.

Mr. Tobolt said he thinks there is room on the application or the website about additional resources. He said he doesn't know if we need to go into too much detail about different types of funding.

Mr. Viswanathan said something lacking in RED proposals was which people within a community would benefit from the project. He brought up the example of the community drop-in center that was targeting a specific population in need. He suggested clarifying questions 8 and 13 and maybe asking for a separate question or sub-question.

Mr. Pinto said that a lot of the questions are ambiguous or lacking. He said the project justification and question #4 sound the same. He said these questions probably could use more detail or clarification. He stated that he would look them over more closely before the next meeting to offer suggestions for improvements.

Ms. Hine said we give proposers the scoring sheet and asked if the questions are linked to the scoring sheet. Ms. Hammer confirmed that they are. Committee discussed.

Ms. Gerth asked if the Committee could see an example text that sent with proposals two cycles ago. Committee discussed.

Ms. Gerth said that the homework for next time is to look through the materials closely and come prepared to discuss improvements at the next meeting.

Ms. Bryand said she thinks it's more beneficial to help people prepare for presentations because that's where she gets most of her information. Committee discussed.

Mr. Viswanathan said he was thinking of an example of a person giving a bad example on the bus tour. He said as long as the application can set people up for the kind of info the Committee is looking for, it doesn't all need to be on the application.

Mr. Dorer said that the 5 minute presentation limit is too short, especially for people who don't have a lot of experience putting these together. Mr. Pinto said that's why he thinks the applications are very important.

Mr. Olson said the Committee has a few people whose terms expire soon. He asked how the Committee is going to address those spots so that they don't come up short at a later time. Mr. McCarthy said he would look into the issue.

Ms. Gerth said she thought this was a productive discussion and that it was helpful brainstorming.

6. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned.

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